



**Homeland
Security**

Press Release

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DHS BEGINS SECOND PHASE OF ARIZONA BORDER EFFORT *More than 500 Border Patrol Agents to be Added*

Tucson, AZ – Today U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner Robert C. Bonner and Assistant Secretary for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Michael J. Garcia, unveiled Phase II of the Department of Homeland Security’s Arizona Border Control Initiative, a massive federal law enforcement effort to gain greater operational control of the Arizona border. Phase II builds upon the results of last year’s Arizona Border Control Initiative and directly supports DHS’ priority anti-terrorism mission--preventing terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the U.S.-- by reducing the flow of illegal aliens and disrupting smuggling operations.

“The Department of Homeland Security is determined to gain operational control of our nation’s borders,” stated CBP Commissioner Bonner. “Today we are increasing our boots on the ground and assets in the in the air because in a post 9/11 era, security our borders is a national security issue.”

“Our dedicated work to restore integrity to the nation's immigration system is working,” said Assistant Secretary Garcia. “By targeting violent criminal organizations that exploit vulnerabilities in our border, we are securing our homeland and safeguarding our communities.”

ABC Initiative Phase II will significantly increase personnel, double aerial support, increase the use of “smart border” technologies, and strengthen partnerships with state, tribal and local law enforcement. Specifically under ABCI Phase II:

- 534 CBP Border Patrol agents will be permanently assigned to the Arizona border, an increase of nearly 25 percent.
 - 155 seasoned CBP Border Patrol agents permanently assigned to the Arizona border
 - 379 CBP Border Patrol trainees permanently assigned to the Arizona Border over the course of the year.
- 200 CBP Border Patrol agents will be temporarily assigned to the Tucson Sector.
 - 26 of which will be assigned to search and rescue efforts to save the lives of migrants in peril
- 23 CBP aircraft and support personnel will be temporarily assigned to the Arizona border.
 - 16 “A-Star” helicopters, 4 UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and 3 Fixed Wing aircraft

DHS announces ABCI Phase II

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The increased aviation operations and personnel supports DHS' priority mission of anti-terrorism, detection, arrest, prosecution and deterrence of all cross-border illicit trafficking along the Arizona border.

In addition, ICE's Detention and Removal Operations (DRO) will continue to build upon operational efficiencies for alien removals in Arizona. ICE's Phoenix field office leads the nation in removals of illegal aliens. In the fiscal year 2004, more than 35,000 illegal aliens were detained and removed through judicial proceedings; nearly one-third were criminal aliens.

Phase II of the Arizona Border Control Initiative exemplifies an unprecedented effort by the United States Government to increase the security of our nation's borders. DHS has again selected the summer months for this program given the danger of loss of life is greatest in the desert heat. Besides the additional resources, Phase II will build on partnerships with the Government of Mexico to create a safer and more secure border through the Border Safety Initiative and Interior Repatriation. Phase II will implement several techniques designed to disrupt human smuggling activity, expand and spread out enforcement operations, and significantly improve the mobility of agents on the ground by following the central command structure laid out in CBP Border Patrol's National Strategy. Phase II will also pursue aggressive prosecution at the federal and state levels in close coordination with the U.S. Attorney's Office for Arizona.

The level of cooperation from the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of the Interior, the Tohono O'odham Nation, the U.S. Attorney's Office for Arizona, Arizona Department of Public Safety, Arizona Office of Homeland Security and dozens of local law enforcement agencies demonstrates the importance of gaining better operational control of our border.

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